

Classical Music and the Cosmos

Classical Music · Practice Test · 18 Questions

1. Which English composer wrote the famous orchestral suite titled 'The Planets'?

- A) Gustav Holst
- B) Edward Elgar
- C) Benjamin Britten
- D) Ralph Vaughan Williams

2. How many movements are in Gustav Holst's 'The Planets' suite, representing the planets known at the time?

- A) 5
- B) 7
- C) 9
- D) 12

3. In 'The Planets' suite, which planet is famously associated with the subtitle 'The Bringer of War'?

- A) Mars
- B) Jupiter
- C) Saturn
- D) Venus

4. Which planet is portrayed as 'The Bringer of Jollity' in Holst's 'The Planets'?

- A) Mercury
- B) Jupiter
- C) Neptune
- D) Uranus

5. Which celestial body, formerly considered a planet, does not have a dedicated movement in Holst's original 'The Planets' suite?

- A) Pluto
- B) Mars
- C) Venus
- D) Saturn

6. What is the name of the recurring musical theme in the 'Jupiter' movement of 'The Planets' that became a famous hymn tune?

- A) Ode to Joy
- B) I Vow to Thee, My Country
- C) Jupiter's Call
- D) Space Anthem

7. Which composer wrote '2001: A Space Odyssey' opening theme, 'Also sprach Zarathustra'?

- A) Richard Strauss
- B) Johann Strauss II
- C) Franz Liszt
- D) Gustav Mahler

8. What philosophical work by Friedrich Nietzsche inspired the title of Richard Strauss's 'Also sprach Zarathustra'?

- A) Thus Spoke Zarathustra
- B) Beyond Good and Evil
- C) The Birth of Tragedy
- D) Human, All Too Human

9. Which planet is musically described as 'The Bringer of Old Age' in Holst's suite?

- A) Saturn
- B) Neptune
- C) Mercury
- D) Mars

10. Which instrument family is heavily used in 'Also sprach Zarathustra' to depict the sunrise and the vastness of space?

- A) Brass
- B) Percussion
- C) Woodwinds
- D) Strings

11. In 'The Planets', which movement features a wordless female chorus that fades into silence to represent the vastness of deep space?

- A) Neptune
- B) Mercury
- C) Uranus
- D) Venus

12. Which 'Planet' movement is known for its fast, scherzo-like tempo representing the 'Winged Messenger'?

- A) Mercury
- B) Mars
- C) Jupiter
- D) Saturn

13. Which planet is musically depicted as 'The Magician' in Holst's work?

- A) Uranus
- B) Neptune
- C) Jupiter
- D) Mars

14. Who wrote the symphonic poem 'The Planets', an early 20th-century work that explored the astrological signs of the planets?

- A) Gustav Holst
- B) Claude Debussy
- C) Jean Sibelius
- D) Igor Stravinsky

15. What scientific field inspired the compositions of many classical works that describe the movement of stars and planets?

- A) Astronomy
- B) Biology
- C) Chemistry
- D) Geology

16. Which movement of 'The Planets' is known for its peaceful, flowing melody representing 'The Bringer of Peace'?

- A) Venus
- B) Mars
- C) Jupiter
- D) Saturn

17. The use of what piece of music in the film '2001: A Space Odyssey' helped popularize Richard Strauss's work for future generations?

- A) Also sprach Zarathustra
- B) The Blue Danube
- C) Symphony No. 5
- D) The Planets

18. Which celestial phenomenon does the 'Sunrise' section of 'Also sprach Zarathustra' celebrate?

- A) The rising sun
- B) A solar eclipse
- C) A supernova
- D) The orbit of Venus